

Horton House Remains
Main Road, north end of Jekyll Island,
Glynn County, Georgia

HABS No.
GA 2150

HABS
GA
64-JEKI
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HORTON HOUSE REMAINS

HABS
GA
64-JEKL
1-

Street Address or Location: Main Road, north end of Jekyll Island,
Glynn County, Georgia

Present Owner: State of Georgia, State Capitol, Atlanta, Georgia

Brief Statement of
Significance: This house was burned by the Spanish in 1742
and belonged to Major Horton, who assumed com-
mand of the regiment when General Oglethorpe
returned to England.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: William Horton. House burned by Spaniards in 1742. Jekyll Island sold to Clement Martin in 1768 by the Trustees. He sold it in 1791 to four French aristocrats. One of these, Christophe Poulain duBignon came into sole possession of the island. His heirs retained Jekyll and Horton's House until 1886, when the millionaires club bought it. Georgia bought it in 1942.

2. Date of erection: Prior to 1742.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: William Horton was born in England and came to Frederica with Oglethorpe's Regiment. He became a captain and settled on Jekyll Island, where he erected a house and a brewery. He developed a plantation on Jekyll, which helped supply the settlement at Frederica. The house was one of two stories, made of tabby. There were other outbuildings, one of which was a barn. Horton cut a road through the north end of Jekyll, which is still known as Major Horton's Road. When the Spanish attacked St. Simons in 1742, they landed at Jekyll and burned Horton's House. He returned to Frederica, where he assumed command of the regiment when Oglethorpe returned to England for the last time. Major Horton died of a malignant fever in Savannah on January 23, 1748. Jekyll Island was granted by the Trustees to Clement Martin, their secretary, in 1768. He sold it in 1791 to four French aristocrats, who had fled the Reign of Terror. One of these men got sole possession of Jekyll Island. He was Christophe Poulain du Bignon. He rebuilt the old Horton House and lived in it himself. As his family grew, he added two wings of wood. He died in 1814. His descendants remained owners till 1886, when they sold the whole island to the Millionaires Club. This group of America's richest financiers and industrialists retained the island for their private pleasure until 1942, when they sold it to the State of Georgia. It is thought that the Club made some additions or attempts at stabilization of the Horton House. Part of Major Horton's brewery still stands, and the du Bignon cemetery is still in good condition at the site. (Source of above information: signs at the site by the Georgia Historical Commission.)

HABS
GA
64-JEKL
1-

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Only house connected with the original settlement at Fort Frederica with remains above grade; dates prior to 1742.
2. Condition of fabric: Ruinous; outside two-story walls and one-story interior partition intact. Fabric much repaired.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 41'-6" x 18'-0"
2. Foundations: Undetermined - probably tabby.
3. Wall construction: Poured tabby
4. Chimneys: Two - now flush with end walls. Of old brick in shell lime mortar and modern brick in cement mortar. Brick cheeks and flue now stuccoed.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Symmetrical arrangement on north and south walls with four windows and middle door on first floor and five windows on second floor. No openings in end walls.
 - b. Windows and shutters: See a. above. Recent stucco work has covered any trace of shutters, framing or trim.
6. Roof: Shape and covering of roof unknown; more likely hip than gable, as indicated by even cornice line on all four sides.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Two-story building with rectangular layout. First floor consisting of two rooms divided by 10" tabby partition; no evidence of floor plan of second floor.
2. Stairways: No evidence
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls finished inside and outside with cement and sand stucco, probably applied in late nineteenth century.
4. Doorways and doors: One, middle of partition.
5. Heating: Two fireplaces, one at inside middle of each end wall. Hearths undetermined.

HABS
GA
64-JEK

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Main entrance of house faces north. Situated on north end of Jekyll Island in a flat wooded area with a clearing around the house. Overlooks marshes of Glynn and St. Simons Island to northwest.
2. Outbuildings: Broken tabby ruins a few feet to southwest indicate an outbuilding. Use undetermined.

Prepared by Philip E. Gardner June 1958
Architect, National Park Service

Addendum to
Horton House (Remains)
Main Road
Jekyll Island
Clynn County
Georgia

HABS No. GA-2150

HABS
GA
64-JEKI,
1-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

24

HABS
GA
64-JEK1,
1-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ADDENDUM TO
HORTON HOUSE REMAINS

HABS No. GA-2150

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

William Horton came to Georgia with Oglethorpe in 1736, when the first settlers for Frederica were brought to America. He was Undersheriff of Herefordshire, and according to the diary of the Earl of Egmont, was worth L-3,000. Horton brought 10 indentured servants with him to Frederica, and was granted 500 acres of land on Jekyll Island.

Horton was a trusted officer in Oglethorpe's regiment, being Captain of a Company of Grenadiers, and later was promoted to Major. An interesting document of his military service is a brass name plate from the gun-stock of his gun, unearthed at the Barracks at Fort Frederica. Horton was sent by Oglethorpe on important missions to the English at Charleston and to the Spanish at St. Augustine, and was left in charge of the Colony during Oglethorpe's absence in England. Also, in 1740, Horton was sent to England by Oglethorpe to plead for men and munitions for the defense of Georgia, and after conferring with Egmont, Walpole, and Newcastle, and attending meetings of the Trustees, the Admiralty and Parliament, succeeded in getting some of the needed men and supplies.

Horton was placed in charge of Jekyll Island and besides his two-story house, made extensive improvements there. To the southwest of his house, he built a brewery to make beer for the soldiers at Frederica. Crops of rye and hops were planted to supply the brewery, and in 1746, John Pye, one of the early settlers, describes some of these improvements as follows: "I had ye pleasure to see Major Horton's improvements on Jekill. He has a very large barnfull of barley not inferior to ye barley in England, about 20 ton of Hay in one Stack, a Spacious House and fine garden; a plow was going with eight horses, and above all, I saw 8 acres of Indigo of which he has made a good quantity and two men are now at work. They told me the Indigo was as good as that made in the Spanish West India's."

On November 13, 1745, James Pemberton of Philadelphia visited Frederica and Jekyll Island and recorded that he "saw the largest barn he ever beheld at Major Horton's plantation on Jekyll". William Logan, who accompanied Pemberton mentions in his Journal that they "were gentiely (sic) entertained by Capt. Horton and after dinner Horton took us out about a mile to see a field of barley which is an uncommon thing in this Colony, but he having a particular inclination to farming hath made many good improvements on this Island and has one of the largest barns I have ever seen." Before Logan and Pemberton left, Horton gave them two sheep, a quarter of fresh beef, and a variety of "pott-herbs."

5

PART II. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Supplemental Material:

For an 1742 map depicting the Jekyll Island area see: Cartografia de Ultramar, a 4 volume atlas compiled by Spain's Servicios Geografico e Historico de Ejercito, published by Imprento del Servicio Geografico del Ejercito, Madrid, 1949-1957. Map 63, Vol. II.

Prepared by:
Ruby Wilson Berrie

Edited by:
Drucilla J. Null
HABS Historian